4063

GENERAL RULES, ORDERS

AND

REGULATIONS,

AGREED UPON TO BE OBSERVED

BY THE

Brothers Friendly Society;

ESTABLISHED

AT WEEPING-CROSS, k

In the Pariſh of BASWICH, in the County of Stafford,

On SATURDAY the Thirty-firſt Day of MAY, One Thouſand, Seven Hundred and Ninety-four; in the Thirty-fourth Year of the Reign of His preſent MAJESTY,

GEORGE THE THIRD.

NEWCASTLE: PRINTED BY JAMES SMITH.

BRITISH MUSEUM

PREFACE.

BENEVOLENCE is the only Aim of this our Inſtitution. What avails brotherly Love without a heartfelt benevolent Charity to enforce the ſame?

When we conſider our Wants and our Imperfections, we have every Reaſon to acknowledge the Goodneſs of God, for placing us in Society; whereby we are enabled to receive and confer reciprocal Helps and mutual Obligations; and more eſpecially ſince, in the Laws which he hath ordained as the Rule of our Lives, he hath ſo wiſely ſuited our Duty to our Nature, that Obedience to his Commands, is Happineſs to ourſelves. This every benevolent Man will experience, who comprehendeth in his Wiſhes the Happineſs of Mankind, and from the Generoſity

of his Heart endeavoureth to promote it.—That this is the true and laudable Design of this Society, will sufficiently appear from the following Articles, by which we it's respective Members do bind ourselves to relieve every afflicted Member, as far as may be consistent with the general Good of the Society, and hinder the Outrages of Want from entering his Doors. We hope our good Intentions and Charity may every Day become more conspicuous, and that our benevolent Views may be animated by the repeated Addition of well-disposed Members, so that collectively, we may make this Society a Nursery of Religion, Virtue and Industry. Christ saith, "a "new Commandment I give unto you that you "love one another." Then let us all make sure of the Advantages of a good Life, that we may live happily, die peaceably, and at last be entitled, through the Merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ, to an eternal Inheritance in that Kingdom which he has purchased for us with his most precious Blood.

AR-

ARTICLES

OF THE

Brothers Friendly Society.

ARTICLE I.

IT is mutually reſolved, that a Meeting of the Members of this Society ſhall be held on the laſt *Thurſday* of every Calendar Month: From the firſt of *April* to the firſt of *October*, to begin at ſeven o'Clock in the Evening; and from the firſt of *October* to the firſt of *April* at ſix o'Clock, and remain till all the Buſineſs ſhall be ſettled. That at each of theſe monthly Meetings, each Member ſhall pay ten Pence to the Box: and as much ſhall be ſpent as the *Preſident* and *Stewards* ſhall think proper, not exceeding ſix-pence each Member.

II.

THAT this Society ſhall conſiſt of one *Preſident*, one *Clerk*, two *Stewards*, two *Wardens*, and as many other Members as the Society may think convenient. No Member ſhall be admitted, who is under the Age of eighteen or above the Age of thirty-two Years; unleſs a ſtout healthy Man, whoſe Age may exceed thirty-two Years, ſhould offer himſelf as a Member. In this Caſe his Admiſſion ſhall be ballotted for by the Society.—Five black Balls ſhall at any Time exclude a Candidate. When any Perſon is deſirous of becoming a Member of this Society, let him, at any Meeting ſend his Name and a Shilling; and at the ſubſequent Meeting let him perſonally appear, and be examined by the *Stewards*. If not admitted by Ballot, let his Money be returned; but if admitted he muſt pay two Shillings more, as Entrance, ſix-pence for a Book of Articles, and ſix-pence for every twenty Pounds the Box is worth at his Admiſſion. The Perſon thus deſirous of joining this Society ſhall be requeſted, by the Preſident or Stewards, to leave the Room during his Election. The Admiſſion of any

Member

Member thus elected, ſhall be dated one Month prior to his Election.

III.

THAT the *Preſident* and *Clerk* ſhall officiate a Year: The *Stewards* and *Wardens* a Year alſo, reſpectively. The acting *Preſident* and *Stewards* ſhall, at that Quarter-Meeting next before the annual Feaſt, propoſe each one Member, who ſhall ſtand as Candidates; and he who gets a Majority of Votes ſhall act as *Preſident* for the following Year, entering upon his Office on the Cloſe of the annual Feaſt, at which Time the old one ſhall reſign. In like Manner for the *Clerk*. The Members ſhall ſerve as *Stewards* in Rotation, according to their Priority of Enrollment; and the reſigning *Stewards* ſhall take the Office of *Wardens*.

IV.

THAT the Power and Office of the *Preſident* ſhall be, *to take Security for the Box, Caſh, and other Effects;* to ſee that the Club Room be furniſhed

niſhed with all Things neceſſary; to call a Meeting of the whole Society on any Emergency; to fine any *Officer* for Neglect of Duty; alſo to receive all Fines; to keep the Society in good Order by the Aſſiſtance of the other *Officers;* to command Silence; to ſee the Reckoning paid; and to aſſiſt the *Stewards* in their Duty.

V.

THAT the Power and Office of the *Clerk* ſhall be to keep the Society's Accompts; to receive the Names of thoſe who wiſh to join the Society, and alſo their Entrance Money, which, if the Perſon does not appear as ſpecified in the ſecond Article, ſhall be added to the Society's Stock. Alſo, he ſhall write out Liſts for Funerals, or other public Meetings, if required by the *Stewards;* for the due Performance of which, and for keeping the Society's Accompts, he ſhall receive five Shillings per Quarter, and be Club-free, except paying eight-pence per Month to the Stock.

VI. THAT

VI.

THAT the Authority and Office of the *Stewards* ſhall be to receive Brethren and their Entrance, for the *Clerk;* to viſit and pay the Sick; to bury the dead; to receive the Society's monthly Dues, and all other Dues and Fines owing to the Society; to keep good Order; to command Silence; to pay the Reckoning; and to fine any Member of this Society for Miſconduct, according to its Rules. Alſo to prevent Frauds, they ſhall viſit the Sick, at leaſt once a Week, who reſide within the Diſtance of five Miles from *Weeping Croſs.* They ſhall alſo bid to Funerals, (never going beyond the Diſtance of five Miles) and ſummon all the Members to an extraordinary Meeting, for which each ſhall receive one Shilling out of the Box.

VII.

THAT the Power and Office of the *Wardens* ſhall be, to obſerve all Grievances and Offences given by one Member to another, at any Meeting; alſo, on any Member's Conviction

viction of breaking any of the Rules of this Society, the *Preſident* ſhall exact a Fine according to the ſubſequent Laws of Fines. The ſaid *Wardens* ſhall alſo endeavour to find out every Offender. One of them ſhall ſerve the Society with Liquor, without Partiality; whilſt the other ſhall take Care that no Member abſent himſelf from the Club-Room, without firſt aſking Leave of the *Preſident* or *Stewards*, except on particular Occaſions.

VIII.

THAT there ſhall be a Box provided, large enough to contain the Books, Caſh, and all other Things uſeful and belonging to the Society. The Box ſhall be locked by four Keys of different Make, two of which ſhall lock a Diviſion in the Inſide, large enough to keep the Caſh, &c. ſeparate from the Books; and the other two ſhall lock on the Outſide of the Box. One of the Keys ſhall be kept by the *Preſident*, one by each of the *Stewards*, and the fourth by the Perſon who gives Security for the Box. There ſhall alſo be provided one general Club-Book, and a Book for the Entry of Articles made ſubſequent to the Printing of theſe, and other

other material Occurrences. Alſo Balls for voting with, &c.

IX.

THAT the Box ſhall not be opened, but in the Preſence of the *Preſident* and *Stewards*, or whom they may appoint. No Caſh ſhall be lent, Fines levied, Brethren elected, or any Buſineſs of public Importance tranſacted, but with the Conſent of a Majority at any Meeting. Alſo, that if the Deciſion of any Matter of Importance ſhould be neceſſary at any Monthly-Meeting, which cannot be poſtponed to the next Quarter-Night, and there be not Members preſent who can decide it in a Manner that may be ſatisfactory to themſelves and the whole Society; the *Preſident* ſhall inveſt the *Stewards* with the Power of calling a Meeting as ſoon as poſſible, that the ſame may be diſcuſſed by the whole Body of Members.

X.

THAT no Perſon of any Religion, but the Chriſtian Religion, ſhall be admitted a Member

ber of this Society. Alſo, no Perſon, practiſing for his Livelihood any Buſineſs that may, in any Reſpect, tend to the Deſtruction of good Health, ſuch as, Gilders, Dead-White-Painters, Miners, Bailiffs, or Bailiff-Followers, Soldiers, Seamen, Watchmen, or any belonging to the Militia. And any Member of this Society who may enter into any of the aforeſaid Claſſes ſhall be excluded, except impreſt, or by Ballot be obliged to ſerve in the Militia; then he, on being diſcharged, ſhall be re-admitted, providing he poſſeſs good Health and a ſound Body; and ſhall, after three Months, re-aſſume any Power or Office, which he held before his Expulſion.

XI.

THAT the quarterly Meetings ſhall be the laſt *Thurſdays* in *January*, *April*, *July* and *October*; and the annual Feaſt on *Old May Day*; at which Time each Member ſhall ſubſcribe one Shilling and ſix-pence for his Dinner and Liquor, until the Box ſhall be worth 100l. After that the Dinner, &c. ſhall be paid for out of the Box. The eighteen Pence of any Member

Member, not preſent on the annual Day, ſhall be forfeited to the Box. The whole Society ſhall alſo attend Church before Dinner, where there ſhall be a Sermon preached proper on ſuch an Occaſion.

XII.

THAT no Member ſhall receive any Money out of the Box for one Year after his Admiſſion. Then in Caſe of Sickneſs and Inability of getting his Living, he ſhall receive four Shillings weekly. In his third Year, four Shillings and ſix-pence; in his fourth Year, five Shillings; in his fifth Year, five Shillings and ſix-pence, and in his ſixth Year, and above, ſix Shillings during his Sickneſs, provided it be not the Reſult of Debauchery, or any manifeſt evil Courſe of Life; in this Caſe he ſhall receive nothing. Such ſick Member's weekly Allowance ſhall commence on his informing the *Clerk* by a Certificate: but during his Sickneſs he ſhall ſtill continue to pay his Club-Money as another Member. Alſo any Member, whilſt he receives ſuch Benefit from the Box ſhall not be allowed to

get

get drunk, game, or do any Kind of Work, except ſigning his Name to a Letter or Receipt, or giving Orders to Servants, and ſuch trifling Buſineſs. And ſhould any Member's Sickneſs unfortunately leave any Impediment upon him, which ſhould render him unable ever to get his Living, he ſhall, by making a monthly Declaration, receive four Shillings a Week, deducting his monthly Payments. In like Manner for the ſuperannuated.

XIII.

THAT five Pounds ſhall be allowed towards the funeral Expences of any Member, who has been ſo three Years; two Pounds of which ſhall be paid towards thoſe of his Wife, if ſhe die firſt, and three to his own: and each ſurviving Member ſhall, the next Meeting, ſubſcribe one Shilling towards this Sum for his deceaſed Brother. The *Officers* of this Society ſhall alſo attend the Funeral of a deceaſed Brother, if he be interred at *Baſwich* Church, and as many of the Members as the Friends of the deceaſed may appoint.

XIV. THAT

XIV.

THAT when any Member has Occaſion to write to the Society, he ſhall pay the Poſtage of his Letters. And if any ſick Member reſiding beyond the Diſtance of five Miles, do produce monthly a Certificate, ſigned by two reſpectable Inhabitants of his Pariſh, and a Surgeon or Apothecary, aſcertaining the Malignity and true Cauſe of his Diſorder, he ſhall receive his weekly Allowance, agreeable to the 12th. Article, by the moſt expeditious Conveyance.

XV.

THAT no Member ſhall ſtay at the Houſe where the Club is held, longer than ten o'Clock at any Meeting, or Feaſt, unleſs Buſineſs be unfiniſhed; or it be the general Wiſh of the Club to ſtay half an Hour longer.

XVI.

THAT if any Member by an immoral and idle Courſe of Life ſhall bring upon himſelf any loathſome Diſorder or Impediment that ſhall render

render him unable to get his Living, he ſhall be excluded from this Society. And if any Perſon on being admitted ſhould labour under any Diſorder or Impediment which he induſtriouſly conceals from the Society, he ſhall on the Diſcovery of the ſame be excluded. And if ſuch Member ſhould have received the Benefit of the Box, and plain Proofs of ſuch Diſorder or Impediment be alledged againſt him at any future Period, he ſhall pay back the Money ſo unjuſtly received, the Fines, and alſo be expelled.

XVII.

THAT the Perſon in whoſe Care the Box is left, ſhall give ſuch Security as the Majority of this Society may think juſt: and this Security ſhall be kept by the *Preſident*, or ſome other Perſon of Reſpectability in this Society. If any *Officer* ſhall loſe his Key, he ſhall make good all the Charges incurred in opening the Box.

XVIII.

THAT to decide on Matters any Ways repugnant to the Rules of this Society, a Committee

mittee of eleven ſhall be choſen out of the eldeſt Members preſent; the *Preſident* ſhall chooſe four, the *Clerk* three, the *Stewards* each one, and the *Wardens* each one. And if any Member ſhould not acquieſce in the Award given by the ſaid Committee, he ſhall pay the Fine.

XIX.

THAT if any Member ſhall ſteal to the Value of one Shilling, he ſhall on Conviction thereof, be expelled. And if any Member ſhall kill himſelf, and manifeſt Proof of the ſame can be adduced by the Society, the five Pounds i. e. the three Pounds appropriated for his own Funeral, and the two Pounds for his Wife's, if not already paid, ſhall be forfeited to the Box.

XX.

THAT if, by numerous Sickneſſes and Deaths, the Stock in the Box ſhall be reduced to ten Pounds, each Member ſhall contribute an equal Share towards ſuch Sum as may be wanted, or be excluded.

XXI.

THAT every Member reſiding within thirty Miles of *Baſwich*, ſhall attend once or oftener every Year, and pay his Dues to the Box, or elſe the Fine.

XXII.

THAT every Member ſhall, at his own Expence, provide himſelf with a white Rod, excepting about ſix Inches at the Top, which ſhall be black, which he ſhall carry in his right Hand when going to Church at the annual Feaſt, or at the Funeral of a Member. Alſo as ſoon as the Box is worth 60l. a Flag ſhall be provided to follow the Band of Muſic, a black Gown or Cloak without Sleeves, and a painted Staff, for the *Preſident*; and for the other *Officers*, Rods with brazen Heads.

XXIII.

THAT there ſhall be no Addition, Deduction, or Mutation of theſe Articles, but by the Conſent of a Majority at any Quarterly Meeting. And if any Articles ſhould hereafter

after be made, they ſhall be as effectual and binding as any of thoſe printed Articles. Every Act of Importance ſhall be entered in the Society's Book and made public to every Member as ſoon as poſſible. And no additional Article ſhall effect any Member before he has been informed of it.—Thoſe Articles ſhall alſo be read over and explained by the *Preſident*, every monthly Meeting for the firſt Year, and, in future on the annual Feaſt Day only, immediately after Dinner.

XXIV.

THAT on going to Church on the annual Day, a Band of Muſic ſhall be firſt in the Proceſſion, then the *Clergy-Man*, *Preſident* and *Clerk*, ſingle; after thoſe, the *Stewards* together, followed by all the Members by Two's according to their Priority of Entrance, except the two *Wardens*, who ſhall follow the Rear.

XXV.

THAT if any Member die after having been one, and before he has been three Years in

this Society, he ſhall receive fifty Shillings towards his funeral Expences: and every Member ſhall, on the next Quarter-Night, pay Six-pence extra to the Box.

XXVI.

THAT if any Member ſhall promote and wiſh for the Diſſolution of this Society, he ſhall for ſuch baſe Deſign be excluded. And this Society ſhall ſubſiſt and have its due Influence according to the true Intent of theſe Articles, as long as any three Members ſhall remain. Alſo this Society, or a Majority, ſhall be juſtified in any Meaſure conſiſtent with thoſe Articles and the Laws of our Kingdom.

XXVII.

THAT if any Member be deſirous of introducing a Friend, who is ſober, he ſhall aſk Leave of the *Preſident*, and having obtained it, ſhall bring him in, by firſt paying one Shilling for his Admittance, which ſhall be ſpent.

XXVIII. THAT

XXVIII.

THAT if any Member ſhould unfortunately lie ſick more than a Year, and have received the Benefit of the Box ſo long; his pay ſhall then be reduced to four Shillings a Week, to the Termination of his Sickneſs.

XXIX.

THAT if any Member ſhould be drawn to ſerve in the Militia, and be deſirous of hiring a Subſtitute rather than ſerve himſelf, each Member ſhall ſubſcribe one Shilling towards hiring one; and if this Subſcription ſhould exceed five Pounds, the Overplus ſhall be added to the Society's Stock.

XXX.

THAT the honorary Members ſhall, as ſoon as the Buſineſs of the Meeting is finiſhed, have the Liberty of withdrawing into another Room. Alſo, they ſhall not be obliged to act in any Office, unleſs deſirous of it. And if any one of them ſhould be in Office, he

ſhall appoint a Deputy to act, during his Abſence, with full Power, as far as is conſiſtent with theſe Articles.

XXXI.

THAT to preſerve Amity and a proper Decorum in this Society, the ſubſequent Fines ſhall be exacted from every Member whoſe Conduct ſhall ſubject him to them; which Fines ſhall be added to the Society's Stock. And as the true Deſign of theſe Articles is to promote the Happineſs of the whole Society, and relieve it's Wants; it is earneſtly hoped that each Member will conſider his Fraternity, as binding him to Love and Unity; and prefer the Intereſt of his Brother Member before that of a Stranger.

FINES

FINES.

		s.	d.
ANY	Member not giving the *Officers* their reſpective Titles, as Mr. *Preſident*, &c. ſhall pay, - -	0	1
———	ſitting in the *Officers'* Chairs, - -	0	1
———	coming into the Club-Room with his Hat on,	0	2
———	bringing a Dog into the Club-Room, - -	0	2
———	except the *Preſident* or *Stewards*, calling for Ale, ſhall pay for it himſelf, and a Fine of	0	2
———	promoting Gaming, Wagers or Quarrels,	0	6
———	coming into the Club-Room in a State of Intoxication, - -	0	6
———	curſing, ſwearing, &c. for the firſt Offence, and as often as he ſhall repeat it the ſame Night his Fine ſhall be double that of the preceding Offence.	0	6

	s.	d.
Any Member uſing provoking Language and Geſtures, or giving the Lie, ſhall aſk Pardon of the Party offended before the *Preſident*, and pay a Fine of	0	6
——— ſpeaking degradingly of this Society without a juſt Cauſe, - -	5	0
——— aſſaulting another at any Meeting, ſhall aſk Pardon of the offended Party before the *Preſident* and *Stewards*, and pay a Fine of - -	5	0
——— not keeping Silence when commanded, -	0	2
——— for ſpeaking out of Order, - -	0	2
——— for telling any Buſineſs or private Affairs out of this Society, - -	5	0
——— refuſing to ſtand on a Committee when choſen	1	0
——— declaring who is for or againſt any Perſon or Thing on Trial, -	5	0
——— reſiſting the Award given by the Committee,	5	0
——— not appearing within half an Hour after the Club begins, - -	0	2
——— and thoſe in Office, -	1	0

Any

		s.	*d.*
Any Member	refuſing to ſtand as *Preſident* when choſen, except he be an honorary Member, - -	5	0
———	refuſing to ſtand as *Steward*, except he be an honorary Member, -	2	6
Stewards	neglecting to viſit the Sick, according to the 12th. Article, each - - -	5	0
———	neglecting to bid to a Funeral or extraordinary Meeting, each	2	6
Wardens	refuſing to ſtand in Office, each	2	6
———	endeavouring to conceal any Member's Offence who may be Subject to a Fine, -	2	6
The *Clerk*	from any Cauſe being obliged to be abſent, ſhall appoint a ſufficient Perſon to do his Duty, and ſend his Key, half an Hour after the Club begins, or pay - - - -	1	0
Any Member	attempting to go out of the Room without aſking Leave of the *Preſident* or *Stewards*, -	0	2
———	going home before Buſineſs ſhall be finiſhed, unleſs with good Reaſons and Leave of the *Preſident*, - -	0	6
———	except the honorary Members, not paying up		

his

		s.	d.
	his Arrears every Quarter Night, *who is within the Diſtance of five Miles*,	0	6
	and each Month Night after ſo long as he ſhall delay ſuch Payment,	0	6
Any Member	except the honorary Members, not paying up his Arrears once in half a Year ſhall be excluded, except it be any one who reſides beyond the Diſtance of ten Miles, whoſe Payments ſhall be made by himſelf or a Deputy at the annual Feaſt, if not before, free from Forfeits; or he ſhall be excluded,		
———	working, gaming, playing or getting drunk while in full Pay, -	5	0
———	knowing that another receives the Benefit of the Box, whoſe Illneſs is the Reſult of Intemperance, and doth not make it known. - -	5	0
———	having had any private Ailment on him when admitted into this Society, ſhall be excluded on the Diſcovery. And		

if

		s.	d.
	if he ſhould have received the Benefits of the Box, he ſhall pay back the Money ſo received, and a Fine of – –	10	6
Any Member	knowing another to labour under ſome ſecret Ailment on his Entrance into this Society, and not making it known, –	5	0
———	coming near the *Officers'* Tables except on Buſineſs, – – –	0	2
———	interrupting the *Officers*,	0	2
Officers	embezzling the Society's Stock in their Care ſhall pay back the Money, ſo received & a Fine of £.	10	0 0
Any Member	accuſing another of a Breach of thoſe Articles, and not able to make his Aſſertion good, –	2	6
———	ſaying to another, "you have had more Money out of the Box than ſuch a one has had," – –	5	0
———	except the honorary Members, receiving a Summons to attend a Funeral or Meeting extraordinary, and not attending – –	0	6
———	admitted this Society, not giving his Occupation		

		s.	d.
	pation, Age and Place of Abode, correctly, –	0	6
Any Member	apearing indecent or without his Rod at the annual Feaſt, or in a State of Intoxication, – –	1	0
———	contriving to diſſolve this Society – –	10	6
———	conſenting to ſuch a wicked Conſpiracy, –	10	6
———	Any Member for Expreſſions of Diſaffection to the King and Conſtitution, ſhall pay –	10	6
Officers	not attending a Funeral, – –	1	0
Any Member	not walking in Order at the annual Feaſt or at a Funeral – –	0	6
———	receiving the Benefit of the Box under Pretence of Sickneſs, ſhall return the Money, and pay a Fine of – – –	10	0
———	bringing into the Room a Stranger who is ſober without Leave, – –	1	0
———	bringing in a Stranger who is drunk, with Leave	5	0

☞ *If any Member, juſtly charged with any of the above Fines, ſhould refuſe to pay them, he ſhall be proſecuted by Law, and afterwards excluded.*

CER-

CERTIFICATES.

1ſt. One from a Sick Brother ſoliciting the Aid of this Society, directed

To the *Clerk* of the BROTHERS FRIENDLY SOCIETY, *Baſwich*; poſt paid.

This is to certify to the Preſident, Stewards, &c. of the Brothers Friendly Society, that A. B. of in the County of , being a Brother of the ſaid Society, is now ſick, lame, &c.

We Inhabitants of aforeſaid, do aſſert the Truth of the above. In Teſtimony of which we have ſet our Hands, this Day of

A. B.
C. D.

Coſirmed by E. F. Phyſician,
Surgeon or Apothecary.

2nd. One out of the Country announcing the Death of a Member's Wife, directed as before.

This is to certify to the Preſident, Stewards, &c. of the Brothers Friendly Society that A. B.

the

the Wife of C. D. of in the County of who is a Brother of the ſaid Society, died the Day of and was interred the Day of at as Witneſs our Hands this Day of

A. B. Miniſter.
C. D. Clerk,

3rd. One announcing the Death of a Member of the Society; directed as before

This is to certify to the Preſident, Stewards, &c. of the Brothers Friendly Society, that A. B. late of in the County of who, when living, was a Brother of the ſaid Society, died the Day of and was interred the Day of at as Witneſs our Hands this Day of

A. B. Miniſter.
C. D. Clerk.

No.

Entered this Society,

the of 17

God ſave the King.

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